

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 206637

FOR AMBASSADOR YOUNG FROM UNA

FOLLOWING REPEAT PRETORIA 4742 SENT ACTION SECSTATE,
USUN NEW YORK INFO BONN, GABORONE, LAGOS, LONDON,
LUSAKA, MAPUTO, OTTAWA AND PARIS AUG 15.

QUOTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 4742

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORG WA SF

SUBJECT: NAMIBIA

REF: STATE 205348

1. THE PRETORIA FIVE MET TODAY, AUGUST 15, TO DISCUSS THE CURRENT
SITUATION WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO SOUTH AFRICA'S CHARGES OF
SWAPO MILITARY ACTIVITIES. NO REPORT WAS PREPARED BUT THE FOLLOWING
GENERALLY REFLECTS THE GROUP'S ASSESSMENT.

2. SWAPO GUERRILLA ACTIVITY WITHIN NAMIBIA HAS APPARENTLY
INCREASED OVER THE LAST FEW WEEKS. THE FACTS BEHIND THE ALLEGED
BUILDUP ALONG THE BORDER OF SWAPO FORCES WITH MPLA AND VUBAN
SUPPORT ARE MORE UNCERTAIN. THE SOUTH AFRICANS HAVE SO FAR
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PRESENTED NO CONCRETE EVIDENCE BUT INIST THAT THEIR INTELLIGENCE
REPORTS SUCH A BUILD-UP.

3. THE SAG'S CONCERTED EFFORTS TO CALL ATTENTION TO THE CURRENT
INCIDENTS IS PRESUMABLY INTENDED IN PART TO SET THE STAGE FOR
POSSIBLE REPRISALS IF MORE SUCH PROVOCATIONS OCCUR. THE
SAG MAY ALSO HOPE TO PRESSUE THE WEST AND THE UN TO BRING ABOUT

A DE FACTO CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES PRIOR TO THE FINAL SECURITY COUNCIL APPROVAL OF THE PROPOSAL. A SECONDARY CONSIDERATION MAY BE THE SAG'S BELIEF THAT IT CAN DISCREDIT SWAPO INTERNALLY BY UNDERSCORING ITS CONTINUED VIOLENCE.

4. THE PRIVATE ASSERTIONS TO US AND TO THE UN OF A SWAPO MILITARY BUILDUP NORTH OF THE BORDER MAY PORTEND A SAG POSITION THAT ESTABLISHMENT OF SWAPO BASES IN THIS AREA WOULD CONSTITUTE A THREAT WHICH IN TURN WOULD VIOLATE THE "VISIBLE CEASEFIRE." AS THE DEPARTMENT SUGGESTS, IN THIS CASE THE SAG MIGHT TAKE THE POSITION THAT ITS FORCES WOULD NOT WITHDRAW UNTIL THESE SWAPO BASES HAD BEEN REMOVED OR UNTIL THEY WERE UNDER EFFECTIVE UN MONITORING.

5. THE PRETORIA FIVE AGREED THAT A DANGEROUS PERIOD WILL EXIST BETWEEN THE COMPLETION OF AHTAASARI'S VISIT AND THE FINAL SECURITY COUNCIL APPROVAL OF THE PROPOSAL. IT WAS AGREED THAT APPROACHES SHOULD BE MADE TO ALL THE PARTIES CONCERNED URGING RESTRAINT ON BOTH SIDES. GERMAN AMBASSADOR EICK BELIEVED THAT PUBLIC APPEALS FOR A CESSATION OF VIOLENCE BY AHTAASARI COULD BE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE, AS IT WOULD UNDERMINE HIS AUTHORITY AND IMAGE OF IMPARTIALITY SHOULD SWAPO IGNORE THE APPEAL. UK AMBASSADOR SIR DAVID SCOTT SUPPORTED EICK IN THIS VIEW. WE ARGUED THAT THE CRITICAL PROBLEM WAS TO AVOID AN ESCALATING SITUATION THAT COULD BE PLAYED UPON BY ELEMENTS ON BOTH SIDES WHO WISHED TO WRECK THE INITIATIVE, AND NOTED THAT WE HAD

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SUGGESTED TO WASHINGTON THAT A NEUTRAL PUBLIC APPEAL BY AHTAASARI OR WALDHEIM WOULD CARRY WEIGHT ON BOTH SIDES.

6. THE GROUP AGREED THAT PRIVATE APPEALS BY THE UN OFFICIALS TO THE FRONT-LINE STATES AND SWAPO AS WELL AS THE SAG COULD BE PRODUCTIVE. IN ADDITION, THE GROUP FELT IT WOULD BE APPROPRIATE FOR THE WESTERN GOVERNMENTS TO FOLLOW--UP ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS. ON WESTERN HEAD OF GOVERNMENT, FOR EXAMPLE, MIGHT CORRESPOND DIRECTLY WITH PRIME MINISTER VORSTER COMMENTING ON THE PROMISING BEGINNING OF AHTAASARI'S VISIT AND EMPHASIZING THE PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE OF RESTRAINT PRIOR TO THE ADOPTION OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL'S REPORT AND AN IMPLEMENTATION RESOLUTION BY THE SECURITY COUNCIL.

7. INDIVIDUAL WESTERN LEADERS COULD ALSO CONVEY THEIR CONCERNS ON THE DANGER OF A MILITARY ESCALATION TO THE FRONT-LINE STATES WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON ANGOLA. EDMONDSON

UNQUOTE VANCE

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